

LETTER
OF
THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY,
COMMUNICATING,

In compliance with a resolution of the Senate of December 5, 1871, the reports of the Deputy Comptroller of the Currency and the Supervising Architect of the Treasury, in relation to the branch mint at New Orleans, its operations, &c.

DECEMBER 14, 1871.—Referred to the Committee on Finance and ordered to be printed.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
December 12, 1871.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a resolution of the Senate of the United States, "directing the Secretary of the Treasury to transmit to the Senate any information on file in his Department, or which he may be able to procure, showing when the branch mint at New Orleans was established, how long it was continued in operation, what amount of silver or other metal was coined at said mint each year during the time the same was in operation; also from whence said silver or other metal so coined was imported; also the value of said branch mint property, including grounds, building, and machinery; on what terms and conditions, and for what purpose, said grounds were deeded by the city of New Orleans to the United States; and what reason exists, if any, why said branch mint should not be re-established for the coinage of silver or copper, or both;" and in reply transmit herewith a communication from the Deputy Comptroller of the Currency, giving the deposits and coinage of the branch mint of New Orleans, and a report of the Supervising Architect in reference to the title and value of the branch mint property.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

GEO. S. BOUTWELL,
Secretary of the Treasury.

Hon. SCHUYLER COLFAX,
President of the Senate.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE OF COMPTROLLER OF THE CURRENCY,
Washington, December 12, 1871.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt by reference from your office of a resolution of the Senate of the United States, asking "when the branch mint at New Orleans was established, how long it was continued in operation, what amount of silver or other metal was coined

BRANCH MINT AT NEW ORLEANS.

at said mint each year, during the time the same was in operation; also from whence said silver or other metal so coined was imported * * *, and what reason exists, if any, why said branch mint should not be re-established for the coinage of silver or copper, or both."

The branch mint at New Orleans was authorized by act of March 3, 1835, and was opened for business in the year 1838, and continued its business until January 31, 1861.

The coinage during this period was as follows:

	Gold.	Silver.	Total.
1838 to 1847.....	\$15,189,365 00	\$8,418,700 00	\$23,608,065 00
1848 to 1857.....	22,934,250 00	12,881,100 00	35,815,350 00
1858.....	1,315,000 00	2,942,000 00	4,257,000 00
1859.....	530,000 00	3,223,996 37	3,753,996 37
1860.....	169,000 00	1,598,422 33	1,767,422 33
1861.....	244,000 00	825,818 33	1,069,818 33
Total.....	40,381,615 00	29,890,037 03	70,271,652 03

The gold of home production deposited in the branch mint at New Orleans, during the same period, was as follows:

	From 1838 to 1847.	From 1848 to 1857.	1858.	1859.	1860.	1861, to Jan. 31.	Total.
North Carolina.....	\$741 00						\$741 00
South Carolina.....	14,306 00	\$1,911 00					16,217 00
Georgia.....	37,364 00	2,317 00	\$1,560 00				41,241 00
Tennessee.....	1,772 00	947 00	164 12				2,883 12
Alabama.....	61,903 00	15,379 00			\$661 53		77,943 53
California.....		21,606,461 54	448,439 84	\$93,272 41	97,135 00	\$19,932 10	22,265,240 89
Colorado.....					1,770 39	1,666 81	3,437 20
Other sources.....	3,613 00	3,677 00					7,290 00
Total.....	119,699 00	21,630,692 54	450,163 96	93,272 41	99,566 92	21,598 91	22,414,993 74

The coinage previous to the discovery of gold in California was, in gold, \$15,189,365, and in silver, \$8,418,700. During the thirteen years immediately following the discovery of gold in California, the coinage was, in gold, \$25,192,250, and in silver, \$21,471,337 30, of which gold, nearly the whole amount (\$22,265,240 89) was received directly from California. The records of this department do not show from what sources the silver deposited was derived. Of the whole amount, only \$5,648,237 03 was produced subsequent to the discovery of silver in Nevada, and it is probable that these silver deposits were chiefly derived from Mexico and South America.

The stamp value of our silver coin being greater than its intrinsic value, this coinage can be exported only at a loss. The export of silver is, therefore, chiefly in bars, and the coinage of silver is unnecessary, except for purposes of "change."

The Mint at Philadelphia has sufficient capacity for the manufacture of all of the silver and other subsidiary coinage required, and it is not probable that any necessity will ever arise which will require the execution of coinage in the city of New Orleans.

Very respectfully,

JOHN JAY KNOX,
Deputy Comptroller.

Hon. GEO. S. BOUTWELL,
Secretary of the Treasury.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE OF SUPERVISING ARCHITECT,
December 11, 1871.

SIR: In compliance with your instructions of the 7th instant, I have the honor to transmit herewith a copy of the resolution of the mayor and aldermen of the city of New Orleans, Louisiana, ceding Jackson Square in that city to the United States for the use of the branch mint, and a copy of my report on the condition and cost of said branch mint, addressed to you, under date of January 8, 1870.

These papers contain all the information desired by the Senate resolution dated December 5, 1871, that the records and files of this office afford.

Very respectfully,

A. B. MULLETT,
Supervising Architect.

Hon. GEO. S. BOUTWELL,
Secretary of the Treasury.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
January 8, 1870.

SIR: In accordance with your instructions, I have the honor to submit the following report on the condition of the United States branch mint and grounds in the city of New Orleans, Louisiana. Under a resolution of the city council of the city of New Orleans, approved May 11, 1835, the mayor of that city, under date June 19, 1835, did execute with Martin Gorden, esq., a duly authorized commissioner of the United States, a notarial act conveying to the United States the use and occupation of the square of ground inclosed and known as "Jackson Square," situated in said city, and bounded as follows, viz: by Esplanade street, Barracks Street, Levee street, and the public road, for the express and only purpose of erecting thereon a branch of the United States Mint, together with the necessary appendages.

It is provided in the above-mentioned act "that, should it hereafter be deemed necessary by the Government of the United States to remove the mint, contemplated to be established as aforesaid, or to cease to occupy it for such purposes, then the said act shall be null and void."

The plans were prepared in 1835, and the work of erection commenced in that year and continued to 1848, when the building was declared completed, at a cost of \$327,548 55.

In 1853 it was found that, owing to the nature of the land upon which the building is situated, the walls settled so much—some of them having an outward inclination—that it was considered dangerous to occupy the building. To remedy these defects, it was found necessary to take down those walls, and other repairs being rendered necessary from imperfect workmanship, and the natural decay of materials, it was deemed advisable to make the building fire-proof. Appropriations for these objects having been made by Congress, the work of repair commenced in 1855, and continued to September 30, 1858, when the repairs were reported to "have been completed, and the operations of the mint are now pursued without hinderance and with increased convenience and security, as the building is strictly fire-proof," at a cost, from the commencement of the work, of \$588,812 70. Additional repairs, at a cost of \$26,013 10, were made from time to time, the last during 1866-'67.

The building is now in a reasonably good condition, and it is estimated that at a cost of \$10,000 it could again be put in working order.

The building, though large, is not, in the proper sense of the word, a large mint, the greater portion of the building being devoted to residences for the superintendent, the melter and refiner, the assayer, and the coinier.

The mint is not at present in operation, but is partially occupied by the superintendent of light-houses for that coast and by the office of the assistant treasurer.

Accommodations could readily be provided for the officers in the custom-house building.

Very respectfully,

A. B. MULLETT,
Supervising Architect.

HON. GEO. S. BOUTWELL,
Secretary of the Treasury.

In the city of New Orleans, in the State of Louisiana, this nineteenth day of June, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty-five, and in the fifty-ninth year of the Independence of the United States of America.

Before me, Felix de Armas, notary public, duly commissioned and sworn in and for this said city and parish, and in the presence of the undersigned witnesses, personally came and appeared the honorable Denis Prieur, mayor of this city, herein acting for and in behalf of the corporation of the mayor, aldermen, and inhabitants of the city of New Orleans, by virtue of a resolution of the city council adopted in their sitting of the 9th day of May, last past, and approved on the 11th day of the same month, a certified copy whereof is hereto attached for reference, of the one part, and Martin Gorden, esq., of this city aforesaid, herein acting for and in behalf of these United States, as commissioner, appointed by authority of the said United States, with power to superintend the erection and building of a branch of the Mint of the said United States, to be located in this city, of the other part.

Whereas, by the said resolution it was resolved that the use of the square of ground now inclosed and known as Jackson Square, situated in this city, and bounded as follows, to wit, by Esplanade street, Barracks street, Levee street, and the public road, be ceded to the United States for the express and only purpose of erecting thereon a branch of the Mint of the United States, together with the necessary appendages, and that the mayor be and is authorized to convey by notarial act to the said Martin Gorden, esq., the commissioner appointed by authority of the said United States to superintend the erection and building of the said mint, the use and occupation of said square for the purposes aforesaid.

It was further resolved that should it hereafter be deemed necessary by the Government of the United States to remove the mint contemplated to be established as aforesaid, or to cease to occupy it for such purposes, then the said act to be null and void.

And it was further resolved that the resolution adopted on the 25th day of April last, on the same subject, be and is repealed.

And whereas the said resolution has met with the approbation of the said Martin Gorden, esq., commissioner as aforesaid, now, therefore, the said honorable Denis Prieur, mayor as aforesaid, in execution of the said resolution, does, by these presents, convey to the said Martin Gorden, esq., commissioner as aforesaid, the use of the square of ground now inclosed, known as Jackson Square, situated in this city of New Orleans, and bounded as follows, to wit: by Esplanade street, Barracks street, Levee street, and the public road; this conveyance thus made to the United States of the use of said square being for the express and only purpose of erecting upon the said square a branch of the Mint of the United States, together with the necessary appendages: Provided, however, that should it hereafter be deemed necessary by the Government of the United States to remove the mint contemplated to be established as aforesaid, or to cease to occupy it for such purposes, then this act to be null and void.

This conveyance is hereby accepted by the said M. Gorden, esq., commissioner as aforesaid, in behalf of the United States.

Done and passed at the city of New Orleans aforesaid, in my office, the day, month, and year first above written, in presence of Messrs. Amedie Ducatel and Alphonse

Morel, competent witnesses, who have hereunto set their hands, together with the parties, and we, the said notary, after reading the whole.

This act is in conformity with the resolution of the city council of May 9, ultimo, approved on the 11th instant, and is approved New Orleans, June 19, 1835.

GEO. EUSTIS,

Attorney of the Corporation.

MARTIN GORDEN.

D. PRIEUR,

Mayor.

A. MOREL.

AMEDIE DUCATEL.

A. MOREL.

FELIX DE ARMAS,

Notary Public.

Mayoralty of New Orleans, City Council.—Sitting of May 9, 1835.

Resolved, That the use of the square of ground now inclosed, and known as Jackson Square, situated in the city of New Orleans, and bounded as follows, to wit: by Esplanade street, Barracks street, Levee street, and the public road, be ceded to the United States for the express and only purpose of erecting thereon a branch of the Mint of the United States, together with the necessary appendages, and that the mayor be, and he is hereby, authorized to convey, by notarial act, to Martin Gorden, esq., the commissioner appointed by authority of the said United States to superintend the erection and building of the said mint, the use and occupancy of said square, for the purposes aforesaid.

Be it further resolved, That should it hereafter be deemed necessary by the Government of the United States to remove the mint contemplated to be established as aforesaid, or to cease to occupy it for such purposes, then the said act to be null and void.

Be it further resolved, That the resolution adopted on the twenty-fifth April last, on the same subject, be, and the same is hereby, repealed.

F. CUBERTON,

Recorder.

Approved May 11, 1835.

D. PRIEUR,

Mayor.

A true copy.

THEARD JARVIS,

Secretary.

I certify the above and foregoing to be a true copy of the original act and resolution attached, extant in the records of Felix de Armas, late a notary public in this city, and one of my predecessors in office, whose records have been consigned to my custody according to law.

In faith whereof, I grant these presents under my signature, and the impress of my seal of office.

W. H. SHEPPARD,

Notary Public.

NEW ORLEANS, February 15, 1861.

